

STAT

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 1

HUMAN EVENTS
19 December 1981

The Cuban Connection

Puerto Rican Terrorists Also Threaten Reagan Assassination

By DANIEL JAMES

San Juan, Puerto Rico:—Now it is Puerto Rican terrorists who may pose a threat to President Reagan's life, according to intelligence officers here and judging by public evidence. Unlike Muammar Qaddafi's hitmen, as U.S. citizens the Puerto Ricans need not risk crossing borders since they are already here. Also, they are indistinguishable from millions of other Puerto Ricans and Hispanics living stateside and thus can move about freely.

Furthermore, the Puerto Rican terrorists are as well-trained and as fanatical and reckless as their Libyan or other foreign counterparts.

They have announced publicly their intention to "get" the President and top aides in a recent speech by their reputed "godfather," 72-year-old Juan Antonio Corretjer (the last syllable is pronounced like the German guttural "ch"). A revolutionary firebrand for half a century, Corretjer, lauding 11 members of the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN) found guilty of seditious conspiracy by a federal jury in Chicago, charged President Reagan personally with "bribing" and "torturing" one of them, Alfredo Mendez, into betraying his comrades. He then thundered:

"Who deserves contempt? Who deserves punishment? Poor Alfredo Mendez? No! The President of the United States, the CIA chiefs, the FBI chiefs, the warden of Pontiac [Ill.] prison, the public prosecutors Margolis and Sullivan in the federal office of the Chicago district attorney, and the detectives and police of Chicago!"

The President is "humanity's worst enemy," Corretjer pronounced.

Intelligence officers here regard the Corretjer speech as a call to Puerto Rican terrorists to literally "punish" the President and the law enforcement officials involved in prosecuting the FALN "Chicago 11," a case still on the books. There is more than ample evidence of acts of vengeance committed by them over the years.

In December 1979, three terrorist groups ambushed a U.S. Navy bus en route to Sabana Seca Communications Center, near this capital city, shooting two petty officers to death and wounding 10 other naval personnel. In a communique they issued taking responsibility for the attack, the terrorists said they were avenging the alleged murder of a comrade, Angel Rodriguez Cristobal, who was found hanging in a Tallahassee, Fla., prison cell and listed a "suicide." Corretjer exulted, after the sailors were killed, "his [Rodriguez Cristobal's] death is avenged."

Only last January, the same three terrorist groups—the Macheteros, Armed Forces of Popular Resistance (FARP), and Organization of Volunteers for the Puerto Rican Revolution (OVRP)—joined in firebombing nine Air National Guard jets worth \$45 million at Isla Verde Air Base, also near San Juan. This was a deliberately selected military target in their ongoing "people's war of national liberation" against "Yankee imperialism."

The writer has seen a Macheteros-produced videotape of preparations for

the firebombing, which was carried out in only seven minutes, 40 seconds—ample testimony to the terrorists' high level of precision and efficiency.

Since 1975, Puerto Rican terrorist groups have perpetrated 260 acts of violence on the island, according to official count. These range from bombings of banks, post offices and U.S. business enterprises to blowing up electric power plants and assaulting military installations and personnel. An estimated 70 or more violent attacks were committed on the mainland during the same period, mostly by the FALN. Federal authorities have revived their investigation into 31 unsolved bombings in New York City alone, based on new information supplied by Alfredo Mendez.

The FALN is the only Puerto Rican group operating in "enemy territory"—

CONTINUED